

Book Reviews

Incidents of a Whaling Voyage, to which are Added Observations on the Scenery, Manners and Customs, and Missionary Stations, of the Sandwich and Society Islands. By Francis Allyn Olmsted, with a preface to the new edition by W. Storrs Lee. Published with the cooperation of Friends of the Library, Maui, Hawaii. Rutland, Vermont, Charles E. Tuttle Co., 1969, xiii, 360 pp. (A reprint of the book originally published in 1841 by D. Appleton and Co., New York.) \$5.00

Francis Allyn Olmsted intended to begin the study of medicine following his graduation from Yale University. Instead, because of ill health, he decided to sail as a passenger on the whale ship *North America*, bound for the Pacific. After a year and a half at sea, (except for 2½ months in Hawaii and a short visit to Tahiti), he returned to New England with the detailed journal and drawings which provided the basis for the book which was published the year of his return.

This vivid narrative of the whaling industry is enhanced by twelve engravings selected from over fifty drawings made by Olmsted during his journey. The last half of the book is of particular interest to the student of Hawaiiana, with five chapters devoted to the Sandwich Islands, including an excursion to the island of Hawaii. Four chapters are allotted to a two week stopover in Tahiti. The author's account of his return voyage on the merchant ship *Flora*, with the Hiram Bingham Family and Mrs. Thurston and her children among his fellow passengers, provides a graphic comparison of life on a merchant ship with that on a whaling vessel.

Olmsted died in 1844 at the age of twenty-five. The fact that he is known only for this book, in spite of his desire to make a name for himself in medicine, leads to a comparison with the life of Richard Henry Dana, Jr., whose career in international law was overshadowed by his *Two Years Before the Mast*. Dana also cut short his educational career to undertake a voyage to the Pacific for his health, but, unlike Olmsted, Dana shipped as a common sailor. His classic description of life on a sailing ship and of the hide and tallow industry in California was published in 1840, while Olmsted was still in the Pacific. *Incidents of a Whaling Voyage*, published the following year, thus became the second of two major contributions to first-hand documentary accounts of commercial activities at sea during the mid-nineteenth century.

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Abraham Fornander. *An Account of the Polynesian Race*. 1024 + xliii pp. Tuttle 1969. \$15.00

This book occupies an inter-disciplinary gap in Hawaiian studies. The commendable attitude that historical writing should be based on contemporary primary source documents has the corollary that Hawaiian history begins with the log entry of HMS *Discovery* for January 18, 1778, and that anything before that is anthropology. While recognizing that Hawaiian oral traditions contain reasonably solid facts of historical events, Twentieth Century anthropological writing has emphasized the religious, mythological, cultural and literary aspects of this material.

The only books including much pre-discovery history published recently enough to be generally available are Kamakau's *Ruling Chiefs of Hawaii* and a few chapters of Malo's *Hawaiian Antiquities*. Their history is generally confined to the island of Hawaii, and is often obscure to the general reader. The lack of a proper index to Kamakau makes it impossible to pick up the thread once it is lost in a welter of personal and place names, or to grasp significant ties of kinship. Far too often, the names of persons associated with historic sites like Honaunau, Wahaula and Kukaniloko are just names to many with a general interest in Hawaiian history. The information about these persons which makes them memorable and significant is published, but in a format which makes it hard to look up.

Fornander's *Polynesian Race*, originally published in three volumes in 1878-1885, now republished in one volume, fills these gaps. Its second and longest volume covers the history of Oahu, Maui and Hawaii from the time of the chiefly migrations from Tahiti through the wars of Kamehameha. The Kauai material, while fragmentary, is readily available nowhere else. The book includes detailed index by J. F. G. Stokes, which adds greatly to the value of the book since it can be used as a biographical dictionary in which to look up people named in other books. Through its careful organization and indexing, Fornander's book is a useful tool in understanding Kamakau, Malo, etc.

This traditional material sometimes casts light on documented history. An article by Gavan Daws in the 1968 *Journal of Pacific History* suggests that identification of Captain Cook with the god Lono and the makahiki festival endeared him to the priests but made him a threat to the king and chiefs. The traditional fact that three chiefs, one a king of Hawaii, another Kalanio-puu's father (see Beckwith, *Kumulipo* pp. 8-9) were called Lono-i-ka-makahiki falls into place.

The first volume of the *Polynesian Race* begins with an attempt to trace the Polynesians to their earliest origins. Much of this theory is outmoded, as is the etymology to which volume three is devoted, although they do contain material of interest. The latter part of volume one (pp. 166-247) deals with the later migrations and genealogies. Recent criticism suggests that non-authentic details were interpolated in the early part of these genealogies and the conclusions drawn from them by Fornander. The reader will find

Barrere's *Kumuhonua Legends* a useful grain of salt to go with Fornander's earlier history, but as is said in Kenneth Emory's preface to that work, once Fornander reaches the period from the late migrations to Kamehameha, "His handling of this period is authoritative, masterful and indispensable to an understanding of it." The period thus covered is two or three times as long as the subsequent documented period.

Once the dust cover is off, the physical make up of the book is simple, handsome and sturdy. Footnotes are where you can find them.

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Other titles worthy of note in the Tuttle series of reprints are: Johannes C. Andersen, *Myths and Legends of the Polynesians*. Tuttle, 1969. Originally published by Geo. G. Harrap & Co., Ltd., London, 1928, 514 pp. \$10.00

William Ellis. *Polynesian Researches*. Consists of four volumes: *Hawaii*, 471 pp.; *Society Islands*, 438 pp.; *Society Islands, Tubuai Islands, and New Zealand*, 407 pp.; *Polynesia*, 414 pp. \$3.95 each.

Gavan Daws, *Shoal of Time, a History of the Hawaiian Islands*. The Macmillan Co., 1968. 494 pp. Illus., bibliog., notes, index. \$9.95. In elegant prose the story sweeps from the "discovery" of the Hawaiian Islands by Captain Cook in 1778 to Statehood in 1959, and beyond. Along the way Daws demolishes a great many stereotypes and lights up some of the darker incidents out of Hawaii's past. He does not hesitate to make the reader squirm. In my view, this is the best one-volume history of Hawaii so far. Both as to writing and scholarship the book compares favorably with such works in other areas as Barbara Tuchman's *Guns of August* and Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.'s, *A Thousand Days*.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ABCFM	American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions
AH	State Archives of Hawaii
BH	Board of Health, AH
BHL	Board of Health Letters, AH
BHM	Board of Health Minutes, AH
BPRO	British Public Records Office
CCM	Cabinet Council Minutes, AH
DB	<i>Daily Bulletin</i>
DPI	Department of Public Instruction, AH
F	<i>The Friend</i>
FO & Ex	Foreign Office and Executive File, AH
FOLB	Foreign Office Letter Book, AH
HA	<i>Honolulu Advertiser</i>
HAA	<i>Hawaiian Almanac and Annual</i> ; also known as Thrum's Annual
HG	<i>Hawaiian Gazette</i>
HHS	Hawaiian Historical Society
HMCS	Hawaiian Mission Children's Society
HSB	<i>Honolulu Star-Bulletin</i>
ID	Interior Department, AH
IDLB	Interior Department Letter Book, AH
IDLF	Interior Department Land File, AH
IDM	Interior Department Miscellaneous, AH
MH	<i>Missionary Herald</i>
P	<i>Polynesian</i>
PCA	<i>Pacific Commercial Advertiser</i>
PCR	Privy Council Records, AH
PP	<i>Paradise of the Pacific</i>
RHAS	Royal Hawaiian Agricultural Society
SIG	<i>Sandwich Island Gazette</i>
SIN	<i>Sandwich Islands News</i>

